

WE CLAIM:

1. A data network node enforcing flow control in forwarding data traffic over data networking facilities of a private data networking environment, the data network node comprising:
 - a. at least one input port; and
 - b. a service level specifier associated with the at least one input port specifying a predetermined level of service for the conveyance of public access data traffic.
2. A data network node as claimed in claim 1, wherein the service level specifier further designates the at least one input port as an input port conveying public access data traffic.
3. A data network node as claimed in claim 2, wherein the data network node is a data switching node having a plurality of input ports.
4. A data network node as claimed in claim 3, wherein each one of the plurality of input ports is associated one of a plurality of service level specifiers.
5. A data network node as claimed in claim 4, wherein the plurality of service level specifiers are stored in a lookup table.
6. A data network node as claimed in claim 5, wherein the lookup table is included in a switching database associated with the data network node.
7. A method of enforcing flow control in forwarding data traffic over data networking facilities of a private

data networking environment, the method comprising steps of:

- a. selectively assigning a predetermined level of service to a Payload Data Unit (PDU) if an input port on which the PDU was received is designated as conveying public access data traffic; and
 - b. forwarding the PDU according to the level of service associated therewith.
8. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein prior to assigning the predetermined level of service to the PDU, the method further comprises a step of determining the input port on which the PDU was received, from a plurality of input ports of a multi-port data network node.
9. A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein assigning the predetermined level of service the method further comprises a step of querying a database using as a key an input port identifier associated with the input port.
10. A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein assigning a predetermined level of service to the PDU, the method further comprises a step of determining the access type associated with the input port.
11. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein determining the access type ascribed to the input port the method further comprises a step of querying a database using as a key an input port identifier associated with the input port.

12. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein assigning a predetermined level of service to the PDU, the method further comprises a step of determining the predetermined level of service.
13. A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein determining the predetermined level of service, the method further comprises a step of querying a database using as a key an input port identifier associated with the input port.
14. A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein determining the predetermined level of service, the method further comprises a step of querying a database using as a key the access type associated with the input port.